

# O C H O

## Contributors

Erica Fabri  
Lyn Lifshin  
William E. Stobb  
Letitia Trent  
Shane Allison  
Pris Campbell  
Lee Herrick  
Richard Peabody  
Amy King  
John Korn  
Bob Marcacci  
Evie Shockley  
Michael-Earle Carlton  
Grace Cavalieri  
Daryl Rogers  
David Raphael Israel  
Lorna Dee Cervantes  
Diego Quiros

Making his first appearance in OCHO

*Horace Carlton*

## THIRTY MILES WEST OF CHICAGO

paint chips slowly.  
It's so still you  
can almost hear it  
pull from a porch.

Cold grass claws  
like fingers in a  
wolf moon. A man  
stands in corn bristles

listening, watching  
as if something  
could grow from  
putting a dead child

in the ground

## MIDWEST

all that sky  
a flat black  
with only a cat's  
eyes blazing

people wait alone.  
Wind changes in  
the cornleaves.  
People hear it like

a chord augmented.  
Houses chip slowly  
stranded in snow.  
Only the sky is fast

# Lyn Lifshin

## MONET'S *LES* *NYMPHEAS*

the long curved  
room, the walls

starting to  
shimmer, breathe

A Chinese girl  
sitting on the stone  
bench next to me,

dazed, smiling

The lilies moving  
into both of us

## VIOLET JELLY

picking the leaves  
Monday early in  
a cool rain huddled  
in wet sweatshirts.  
Hours in the grey,  
knees and fingers  
numb. Our skin  
smells of violets  
while they soak  
in the red pan  
overnight till we  
boil the green.  
Then the pectin  
turns them lilac.  
We pour them into  
glass, amethyst  
the sun comes thru  
on the window  
after snow

## THINGS THAT SHINE IN QUEBEC CITY AS THE SUN FALLS

light on the ball  
of glass, on  
the puddles  
under the Hilton.  
The St Lawrence glows,  
the flag poles,  
edges of buildings.  
A yellow car in the  
salmon light.

Lights are starting to go on.  
Green copper roofs glow,  
shadows of clouds  
over sailboats  
on the water.

The smell of leaves,  
cool wind blowing.

The water  
a ripple of light  
like a flag of glass.

Diamond ripples.

I think of Diamond Head,  
light that seemed  
magical in a strange  
town. The only  
familiar sign is  
one that says  
Kresge's. Light  
that will glow  
when what  
seems to  
might not.

Green diamonds,  
red diamonds,  
blue diamonds  
starting to cover



# Siamese Cat

# Erica Fabri

She said she could teach me to dance like a swimmer. To move like a

fishtail. Graceful as angelfish. Limber as jellyfish. She turned out the lights. I could only see by the thin beam the window let in. The pad soles of my bare feet could not make more than a light thump sound. She raised and thrust and I followed. We wheeled and ticked. Our arms surfed like fabric. She said, *be scissors, tongs, snakes, clock hands, sprockets, pendulums*. She laid me down and opened my legs like a fan.

She asked me why I was starting to cry. I said I was afraid of her dying before me. In this half-light I could see her wrinkles becoming even deeper slits. When she leaned over me the skin from her neck dangled. When she took me by the wrists and opened me up I could feel how soft my skin was compared to hers.

She told me she'd play music that would turn us into cats. I saw that she was growing whiskers and black diamond shaped pupils. She began to dance like a hunchback, like a tribal woman around a fire. Silver-white hairs began to appear all over her back. Her hands changed shape. Her feet, slapping against the floor, turned black.

Erica Fabri  
**India in the Dark**

Sometimes, she comes to me in the dark.

She is very shy because she hasn't

shaved her legs all week. I say,

*don't be silly, you are radiant*

*like the moon*

. She smokes a joint,

in a dummy way, clams right up

when she hears the staircase say:

*Don't be fancy, Pigeon.*

She hates when he calls her that.

We spend the rest of the night

trying to rhyme words with *Pigeon*,

our lips move like slugs

around the sounds:

*religion, glisten, ribbon...*

# William E. Stobb

# Poem for My Punch

Tonight it's a so-sad instance  
of something-I-see-makes-me-feel  
-okay: nearly

whole      that white  
reflection of our hot remnant  
lays cotton shimmer on  
chairs in wet grass      man  
in the moon  
that's hilarious

I've got children  
dreaming misty forests  
on second floor

a woman says  
she'll never stop  
loving me

my brother  
some boy  
held me down 'til I swung  
man I could  
not sleep after I can't sleep now I  
feel real real I  
feel one hot circle this  
heat is some sun inside

Erica Fabri

## The Night of Great Shapes

I placed a fern between my breasts,  
asked you to name *that* shape:  
*a wood bridge.*  
me from the back?: *a dancing shoe.*  
me bent over?: *a church bell.*  
me making love?: *two can-openers.*  
me in the mud?: *a tattooed hand.*  
as you fall to sleep you demand:  
*now, name me a shape, a very quiet one.*  
this is it:  
you, India, topless last summer, laid out  
over the armchair like a wet dress,  
under that metal fan,  
trying to cool.

Pris Campbell

## Those Lovesick Swallows

Just when you're sure  
the moon isn't going to fall  
and no parallel universe  
will open, the Indians  
and the buffalo wandering beneath  
unpolluted skies once again,  
he walks back into your life,  
spins it around.  
He kisses your mouth,  
suckles your breasts  
and carries you to where  
pain can no longer follow,  
to where those crazy lovesick  
swallows from Capistrano  
fold wings around you,  
and the juke plays oldies  
all day.

William E. Stobb

## Failed Movie

After late driving  
beam-riddled in my mind and through my chest.  
The way headlights adrift  
from the freeway swept the pasture plain  
I had this feeling  
a recently harvested steaming field  
glimpsed through light stray from travel.  
I stopped and tried  
to capture on digital  
what rapid candles of industry were making me.  
Parked at the end  
of a ramp past Fargo  
I walked to the center of the overpass.  
Wait. Air. Stars  
visible through gaps in silver clouds.  
After a while, a van and motorcycle  
approached from two miles out.  
I shot a full minute  
but it doesn't show, really.  
You hear the wind rush and the trim engines pass.  
You see for a moment  
light trails  
too pixilated  
and green glare off the sign that says one  
hundred to the border.  
I felt perforated-honeycombed and waning.  
I shot my face for five counts.  
My eye made one white circle.

## I didn't expect to see you here again

---

Us? Just visiting. Kicked clay dust.  
But what about you? The child's  
face is dirty. Whitney's fat and her lip-  
stick's bleeding. You still take peanuts  
in your pop? His belt buckle's the size  
of my palm. Jesus changed my heart  
when I had my baby. Look—he's got  
Redneck tattooed on his bicep  
in Garamond. Run in there and get  
me them menthols and lottery tickets.  
The door squeals open and I smell  
Frito pie and air conditioning. For a while  
he made good money laying asphalt,  
working for the county. We sure do miss  
having you and your pretty wife  
in our church family. Bodean, leaning on  
the rust-furred pump, doesn't remember  
calling me skank in high school. They  
were making meth in the trailer house  
and it caught on fire—all those babies!  
Whitney has three babies, Holly  
has two, and, it's a shame, but Renee  
turned lesbian up in Tulsa.

## Pantoum on an Ant

Shane  
Allison

I just killed an ant.  
I watched it crawl up the wall  
Before I brushed it to the floor,  
Stepped on it and pulled it in half.  
I watched it scurry up the wall.  
It was a big insect  
So I stepped on it and pulled it in half.  
They must be coming from where it's wet  
Those big bugs  
Biting into thrown away food  
Coming from where it's wet  
Building big nests  
Carrying thrown away food  
Back to their babes  
Living in big nests.  
It struggles for life with a torn off abdomen  
Tries to get back to its babes.  
I feed what is left to my pet house spider  
It struggles for life without an abdomen  
Trying to get away.  
I feed what is left to my pet spider  
That pulls it by the head  
As it tries to get away  
Desperately attempting not to get eaten.

O

C

H

Lee Herrick

## SLOWNESS

O

You in the white. Think of slowness—how acolytes  
fawn over rebels in the arts, as if it were new, or post, post, post.  
What if we were nothing more than a comedy of wit and three letter words:  
you, arc, fan  
letters from four readers in Boise whose lives, like ours, are not slow enough.  
The new language—scroll, forward, MP3= see that mirage?  
The new school forgets the buddhists' distance from desire.  
The monks I saw in Laos walked in a line near the Mekong.  
You in the white. Do you think of me? Do you know how far  
This will go? Do you know how slow a good prayer feels?

The girlfriend who tried to feed me placenta soup.

The one I thought was faking it. I said, "You don't have to carry-on like that with me." I wanted honesty. And of course I was crushed when she seemed bored and unresponsive from then on.

The girlfriend who never wore panties. Corduroys with holes in the crotch.

The girlfriend who spent one hour in the bathroom every morning-doing her makeup.

The girlfriend who never kissed me. Not once.

The wannabe girlfriend who had so many cockroaches in her apartment during the day that I was afraid to be there after dark. She didn't believe in harming living things.

The girlfriend who became a Zen Buddhist.

The girlfriend I almost proposed to. I was on my way over to do the deed when I ran into a buddy. But when I got there she picked a fight over something trivial the minute she opened the door. When my buddy saw her the following morning, and was just about to congratulate her, she blew up about what an asshole I was. To this day she has no idea.

The painter girlfriend who had so many flies in her apartment that it was like a horror movie set.

The girlfriend who goofed and called me "Larry" in bed.

The girlfriend who only pooped in her own bathroom.  
Which made a weekend at the beach a very iffy proposition.

The girlfriend who had a tongue like a cat's. Rough and sandpapery like that. Sigh.

The girlfriend who never wore panties and liked to wear my jeans.

The second girlfriend that became a Zen Buddhist.

The girlfriend who was retroactively jealous of every woman who came before her.

The girlfriend who had a giggle exactly like Marilyn Monroe's.

The girlfriend whose parents were cooler than she was.

The girlfriend who had recently totaled two cars before we had our first date and then threw a tantrum when I wouldn't let her borrow my car.

The third girlfriend who became a Zen Buddhist.

The girlfriend who made love to me, then after I passed out walked across the street to fuck her lover, and then a few hours later woke me by trying to get me interested again. Which might have been OK if I had a stuffed up nose or a cold and didn't smell him.

The girlfriend who met me and a buddy at the door completely naked.



## Richard Peabody The Girlfriend Olympics

The girlfriend whose voice I liked so much I forgot where I parked my car in Georgetown. Which might have been OK if she hadn't gotten so angry about it.

The girlfriend who disappeared when I couldn't pay the check on a lunch date because they didn't take my credit card. Mea culpa, but I was young and it never happened again.

The girlfriend who wanted to dress me up in her clothes, makeup, the works.

The girlfriend who told me my fiction sucked.

The girlfriend who said my writing was filled with clichés.

The girlfriend who nicknamed me "Little Lemur."

The girlfriend who spent an hour in the bathroom every night—removing her makeup.

The girlfriend who said—Choose between me and your books.

The girlfriend whose roommate would come into her room while we were making love and kneel at the foot of the bed and cry hysterically.

Touch me. Don't you want to be a Zen Buddhist, too?

## Amy King

### A SOLUTION TO SCIENCE, IN PART

The thin portrayals were leaving me parched, and time was the only game the children bothered to feed on anymore. A disappearing ink fell upon us, even without our blotters at the ready, so that not all hours passed as clouds into the shortening shadows; the rare ones stuck to our ribs, by our sides, and gave us weight. Our feet held firmly to dirt while our heads dreamed of escape in flight.

And just like that: every special simulacra wanted its fifteen minutes of fame; the scorpion threw out the dead guinea pig in disgust, its only love sacrificed at the behest of these earthbound breasts, this arm, that sky. There should have been more images among us, ones that could mislead the witness on his search for the latest benched inebriation, but boxes began arriving, filled with a human electricity that would light the moon's night.

# Bob Marcacci

in the afternoon when there are flies in the kitchen  
living on their last legs as broken toys  
eventually in the mouth of the cat  
who talks to me in his talk about the black bug  
he's watched for who knows how long  
trying the window endlessly

# 14 Young Women

## john korn

14 young women outside of a rodeo  
huddled into a crowd  
facing one another  
lighting their cigarettes  
off each other's cigarettes  
none had a lighter  
there was only one match

they inhale and exhale  
precisely at the same moment  
and 14 tobacco puffs  
form one dark hanging cloud  
over these 14 young women

and one says, "Oh! did you see  
his lasso?"  
and gasps run through the group  
like a flopping chicken in a barn  
full of bobcats.  
yes they all had seen his lasso  
another says, "his lasso!"  
and sighs steam from 14 young mouths  
yes his lasso

a thick one with smooth breasts  
stomps her foot down  
"never!" she says, "never do I meet  
a man like that!" and she goes on to  
describe the rodeo man  
and from her description  
the man she is trying to illustrate  
is Albert Einstein.  
She finishes by saying,  
"His intellect with that lasso!"  
and groans explode across this group.  
yes they had all noticed the intellect  
and how they'd love to meet a man  
with intellect.

a tall gloomy one steps forth and  
describes the rodeo man as  
Evil Knievel  
"the daring with his lasso!" she cries  
and the moans ripple through them  
in agreement  
and on and on they describe the rodeo man  
the bravery  
yes yes  
the security  
the knowing  
the ape like phallus

"yes!" one screams, "to be fucked  
on a staircase while he bangs my head  
into a splintery step!"

the tenderness!  
"yes," the same one spits, "to be caressed  
so lightly that he is barely touching me!"

the vulnerability!  
"yes! to step on his head  
and throw tacks at his nuts!"

the adventure! in his lasso  
the domestication in his lasso  
the punctuality of his lasso  
the practicality of his lasso  
the staggering rationale  
yes yes they agree and tremble  
in 14 different ways

why could they not meet a man like this?

and the smoke cloud above their heads  
begins to form the shape of this rodeo man  
in hat and in spurs, riding on top  
of a brilliant steed. this vapor man  
that dumps unending quivering loads  
of desire into their hearts  
they nearly sing head back and chin up  
at this apparition...

but then

the thick one with smooth breasts shushes them  
and they all look to the left in unison  
as the real rodeo man, done with his night's performance  
exits the side gate and slowly staggers over  
his jeans are covered in horse shit  
he pulls a chewed up cigar from his front pocket  
and asks if one lady would happen to have a light.  
all 14 women move in with the ends of  
their cigarettes pushed together  
the rodeo man lights his cigar from this.

"shucks," he says, "I think some of this horse shit  
on my pants here might be my shit! no joke.  
I can't wait to get home and eat some cheerios.  
ever see that movie with the man and he's a robot  
from the future and he gotta help this lady and at the  
end he shoots that helicopter?"

no woman of the 14 speak. they smile and nod quickly  
one sweats. another bites her bottom lip.

"Well thanks for the light ladies, and thanks for coming  
to the show!" he says and walks off to his car.

silence... then all woman pull out another cigarette  
and light it off a butt of a dying one.  
the tall gloomy one steps forth  
"oh! did you see his spurs!"  
oh they scream and claw  
the erotic angelic wisdom of his spurs!!

Grace Cavalieri  
*Infidelity*

The woman inquired what my husband wore  
When he went boating. How  
he kept his face out of the wind. I was  
puzzled, trying to recall.  
Sunglasses? A baseball cap? I—  
I don't know—I pondered, (And why do I have to give  
exactly what is asked, I thought.)  
*Well! Weren't you in the boat?*  
*Or were you reading and writing?*  
*Didn't you ever notice?*  
I tried to picture his face to the sun, the rain.  
I think he weathered it well, enjoyed it, even.  
The car went up a steep mountain -  
a razor sharp path with only thin railings  
to hold us to the road -  
Although she was in the back seat with my husband.  
when the driver started up, gunning the motor,  
in spite of the danger, I had to close my eyes.

Marsupial Moon  
Daryl Rogers

Driving home at late night, under  
a saw-toothed, crescent smile,  
  
the road darkened with cold, greasy rain.  
Fallen brown and colored leaves  
  
litter the surface of the highway like  
moths with broken wings and limbs.  
  
My tires bark when I hit the driveway.  
The garbage can is overturned at the curb.  
  
Going to retrieve it I duck under our  
Japanese Maple and its frail branches  
  
nod and weave in the wind like elderly  
dinosaurs with star-shaped scales.  
  
The rain dripping from the their leaves  
is an icy sweat, heavy as motor oil.  
  
The rain should end in the morning.  
The TV show Six Feet Under is coming on.  
  
I fill a tumbler with cracked ice,  
vodka and olives, start a fire with wood  
  
scavenged from the last, devastating  
ice storm back in February 2003.  
  
The dogs are breathing hard and barking  
at a opossum creeping out of the woodpile.  
  
I set up a trip-cage in the backyard  
and bait it with peanut butter.  
  
Tomorrow we'll take the grinning, palsied  
little rat to a nature preserve by the river.

Bob Marcacci

i see myself in the chandelier; you in those shoes; you  
can never have enough; ballroom feel; starhang  
from the ceiling; we danced somewhat; never never  
enough gin; the moon rose over the balcony; we smoke  
on the steps; obscure away from formality;  
as if you were talking to me; the way you were;

*ask your mama if you can walk me  
to the store, she'd plead, her upturned palms*

*beneath my flattened hands, bouncing them,  
my wrists slack, our backs slumped, our sighs loud.*

*trapped in my backyard all afternoon,  
we'd done everything there was to do.*

*i'd stall with silence, already sure  
what my mom would say. if julie were*

*out of earshot: and why do you two  
need to go up there? all those big ol'*

*boys hanging around. just asking for  
trouble. hmph. that gal can't do a thing*

*without wanting to go switch her tail  
in front of some man. if julie were*

*with me, a glaring no. under frowns  
and baby-fied disgrace, i was glad.*

*my mama saved me from the gauntlet  
of gazes and questions i could not*

*answer, the low-pitched laughter that left  
me needing to pee. those high school boys,*

*with round fros sprouting black plastic fists,  
planted in the hot parking lot for*

*hours to smoke and shoot the shit – they had  
little use for stuttering crushes,*

*which were all i dared offer. i whined  
mama to a frenzy, claiming deep,*

*unbearable cravings for icees,  
candy bars, or chips, but rarely got*

*the okay to go, and never with  
julie, who was simply too fast. that*

*girl is going to end up soon with a  
baby, mark my words. i'd quiet down,*

*wondering if trouble hung from those  
flourishing brown boys like something ripe*

*you couldn't help but pick, or if it  
grew somewhere inside a girl like an*

*idea, voracious, wild with hunger,  
wondering who was asking for it.*

# Michael- Earle Carlton

## I ONCE HAD A NAME

You and I danced naked in champagne-filled fountains: our favoured being Trevi, which spilled liquid time with soft ease. Together, we rushed gathered pigeon flocks, freshly settled within St. Mark's Square. On fleeing, each bird cooed blasphemous words at us from atop the Basilica's crown. Quietly, unrecognized, madness crawled through my fragile being like a dying worm. You closed your eyes. To open them, I splashed poems of love in bold, black letters on the peeling, painted border of our decadent hotel suite. You became even more distant, almost invisible. No longer the dry martini who once tethered my tower. As young lovers, we had conquered Italy and France, skipping imperfect pebbles along the latter's rocky shores, where elephants long ago trampled distant mountain slopes. We held hands in sweet innocence, more like my father, with child, until that day you removed me from sanctuary of his home. I still remember your last visit, made before I was left behind by you, nameless and alone. My name is Zelda. You were, and remain, the only love from that stolen childhood

# Lorna Dee Cervantes

## Diego Quiros

### *How to Overload your Senses*

Grab a dollar bill. Or two.  
There's an alternate soundtrack  
to the Wizard of Oz called  
Dark side of the moon.  
Mute the movie, start the music  
when the lion begins the third roar.  
Taste beer 1. Watch. Listen. Listen.

Breath. Dorothy falls into the pig pen,  
watch her race towards an early grave  
Taste beer 2.

Time. The witch rides her bike.  
Listen. Alarm clocks ring.  
Taste beer 3.

Money. Grab your dollar bill. Smell it.  
Rub it between your fingers. Feel it.  
Glinda, hovers on her bubble,  
don't give me that do goody good bullshit.

Us and Them. Black and Blue.  
Two witches, who knows which is which.  
Taste beer 4.

Taste beer 5.  
Taste beer 6.

Brain damage. Feel it.  
The scarecrow, the lunatic  
is on the grass.  
Dorothy's ear is on the Tin Man's chest.  
Listen to his heart.  
Listen.

### *How to Overload Your Senses*

after Keros

That night in the crusted theater  
the dark flickered against your glowing face,  
your angel's grace, rare for a full grown boy,  
was crisping in the shadows. You and me  
willing the Wizard of Oz onto the Dark  
of the Moon, the smell and feel  
of a dollar bill musting in the use.  
A six pack between us. A tight joint  
rusting out of repair, a sound dancing  
on a lark, a rocking the baby to sleep.  
Already, then, you were falling. Pink Floyd  
couldn't save you. The leaking dopa erupting  
into fists on the car, a kick to the wheel  
of love; a draping of hardness over the windows.  
Then, the witch was riding her bicycle away.  
I overshadowed you shadowing you down  
some alley of disrepair, some back lot  
of the self where your reds blotched out  
the blues and any blues was an excuse to party.  
Was I the evil one? Tired of stomping on  
Glenda, never shining like that part  
you were born to play. You and I, a photograph,  
a negative in relief. Your white blond curly hair/  
my straight black mane, my witch's costume.  
At the third lion's roar courage comes alive,  
a soundtrack begins and a poetry lives  
in the layers. The rolled bill in white tight knuckles.  
The constant pass. The talking into nothing.  
The talking back. Your anger, heaving.  
My fallacy of desire, an overload of senses.  
No sense in going back, of folding in on  
ourselves like this unspent one.  
Every time I dare to touch it, it lives  
more and more skinlike, slough from touch.  
I put my mouth to it and Dorothy  
falls into a pit. The ruby shoes  
belong to another. The great house  
of the senses falls into place  
and I exit; expunge; my listening ear  
frozen to the Tin Man's chest.

## The Red Porsche and The Model

I went to the DC Commission On The Arts in 1968, and asked for a Grant to buy myself a maxi-coat, they were in fashion then and so was I, with four children, behind me and a manuscript to tuck in my hem, they asked if I were some kind of housewife-artist, although being called an artist is like being called a child, the child doesn't know she is one, she just thinks she's a person, but in the end they gave me enough to buy stamps and so my career began.

Now I prayed to the angels of funding, saying *should I bring Art and joy to the world?* They said Hell No, Just Try To Get Through The Damn Thing, and so I went out again, this time to the NEA, where I was told all I needed was to get a tall beautiful model who looked like a Goddess, to drive a red Porsche into the reflection pool, and come out the other end, where I would hold up my right hand and we could call that performance art, all went well but for the thumb, leaking and bleeding, stitched from the tendons, held up in position, over time, so it would look good, acceptable and perfect when pulling through each artful day, but lucky for me the oozing added red, making everything brighter and better,

I went to the NEH and said I was a scholar, and I could *escape the moment* as well as anyone, but they asked that I *manage* the moment instead, that is when I saw I was still an artist because I *imaged* the moment, by accident, they said that the door you do not *want* to go through is the one you *must*, and it will lead you here, from any direction, STOP I said, if there is no money, what I will not take from you is comfort, and I buttoned my maxi coat and left,

The song of the soul, was at The Library of Congress, I was in The House of Memory, where all spirits are sent back to earth to work out their vibrations, and I was told, until then I should stretch my eyes, they also said words represent meanings, and if I stole a book, not to expect thanks for it, No Funding is what I think they meant, but that marble, well I loved it,

If language Is used to tell people what you think It is best to say nothing when at The Poetry Foundation, where they said I must be a woman before I die, and to try being a prostitute or a writer, I asked how would I know which I am, adding that in Maine they paint barns, but that doesn't make the farmer a painter, they answered, you may never know, my child,

If you love what you hate, you will not have to hate it anymore, I love the poverty of poetry, I have always loved poetry, the poverty took practice, poems are the bones of God, the flesh we leave to others, perhaps we should not ask for more.



*a meme-poem*

David Raphael Israel

Every word of the poem could be a meme!  
particularly its multisyllabic expressions  
you could make a meme out of saying "hey you seem..."  
and might it be memish to wallow in weird digressions?

if the definition is just an infectious phrase  
is the poem that features memes conceived as source  
or repository? I'll admit I'm still in a haze  
of course there's the fine adverbial meme "of course"

an urban legend is thought of as quintessentially  
a meme that runs around with virulent zeal  
a sheepish meme might sniffle penitentially  
its teardrop-memes informing us how it feels

"I had a dream" is a meme from M.L. King  
"Irene goodnight" is a folkmememe one might sing

A Possible Future Cover Dog

**Horace  
Carlton**



Michael-Earle Carlton

JUST ONE MORE TIME

Brother called long distance late last night,  
his vapor-thin words floating in high air, as  
if he were caught in stormy, whispered winds  
of his own emotion. Each sentence curved,  
swooping over and through separating miles,  
sinking ever deeper into secret crevices.  
For an instant, he was Sisyphus attending  
anger, twisting non-sensical words into  
private rhythms of maddened non-reason.  
I listened, hearing nothing, until his choler  
cooled, before understanding his wild  
irritation. He, on having today solemnized  
sixty-eight years of age, fourteen minutes  
past midnight, mentally restored repeated  
nightmares of his broken youth: he was now  
alone: too frightened at being called "old man."

OCHO is available at  
[www.lulu.com/mipo](http://www.lulu.com/mipo).

Send new work to  
[didimenendez@verizon.net](mailto:didimenendez@verizon.net).

Do not send attachments.  
Designed and edited from  
Didi Menendez' desk.

COPYRIGHT REMAINS WITH  
CONTRIBUTORS  
A MENENDEZ PUBLICATION

OCHO